



# Growing Up Healthy & Active

## September

### Snack Attacks Are Normal

Snack attacks are normal for kids, who need lots of energy from food to keep them going all day long. But when a snack attack strikes, do you know why? What are the best things to eat to get rid of your hunger and give your body great nutrition?

Kids need to refuel their bodies many times during the day because they need a lot of energy for all the things they do. Swimming, walking, carrying your backpack, even playing on the computer all require energy. Kids also have small stomachs, which means they need to fill 'em up frequently! That's where snacks come in: they give you a little fuel to keep you from getting too tired and hungry. Eating snacks keeps your brain and body moving. A good guideline is to eat a meal or snack every 3 or 4 hours.

So should junk food be your snack? No way! Healthy snacks are packed with nutrients that your body needs to grow strong and stay well. Need an example? An orange will give you quick energy now **and** vitamin C for later. A handful of potato chips contains lots of fat, something that most kids don't need. If you want to keep tabs on the nutrition in your food, you can check out the Nutrition Facts Panel.

Does this mean that you can never sink your teeth into a sweet or salty snack that you love? No. It's OK to eat junk food in moderation (this means only every so often and not much of the food at once). Just remember that most of your snacks shouldn't be junk food.

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Even in junior and senior high school parents need to talk with kids about limiting their snack choices with nutrition in mind. In some schools parents can request a computer print-out of lunchroom activity to better know what has been eaten by your student.

Keep in mind that A La Carte and vending options do not follow the same requirements as the school lunch program. Vending machine offerings outside of the lunchroom may not have any nutrition requirements. On the other hand, A La Carte items offered in the lunchroom during the school lunch hour are required to contain a minimum of five percent or more of eight different nutrients.

However, remember that the school lunch program provides one-third of the Dietary Reference. Intakes (DRI) and no more than 30 percent of the calories are from fat. Because A La Carte items can be sold during the school lunch hour, they are sometimes referred to as "competitive foods."

Each school has their own local policies regarding A La Carte and vending options. To learn more about these policies in your school contact the school lunch manager or school administrative team.

### Every Body Size is Right

Fear of fatness is a growing concern for pre-adolescent children because they seldom see a wide variety of shapes and sizes depicted in magazines, television, or movies. Kids also may hear adult role models—mothers, teachers, coaches, and friends—commenting about body size.

Talk to your child about how eating a variety of nutritious foods contributes to their growth and fitness. Stress good health rather than weight and assure them that they are growing according to plan and look "just right." There is no single "best" way to look when you are Growing Up Fit and Healthy.

### Recipe of the Month: Trail Mix

Raisins, dates, dried cranberries, apricots, and/or chopped dried papaya  
Coconut  
Dry cereal (i.e. Honeynut Cheerios™)  
Peanuts, soynuts, almonds, and/or other nuts  
Sunflower seeds  
Chocolate chips or M&Ms™

Combine equal amounts of all ingredients; or adjust proportions to suit family preferences. Store in covered container.

### For More Information

Visit these ISU Extension Web sites:

*Nutrition*—[www.extension.iastate.edu/healthnutrition/](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/healthnutrition/)

*Answerline*—[www.extension.iastate.edu/answerline](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/answerline)

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